

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-9. (Canceled)

Claim 10. (Currently Amended) A method for tracking purchases of electronic books
via a computer, comprising:

receiving a plurality of electronic books at an operations center from a plurality of
sources;

formatting the plurality of electronic books into a standard format;

storing the formatted electronic books in a repository at the operations center;

storing identifications for the of a plurality of electronic books for display on a
viewer in a repository accessible by a processor;

associating via the processor each of the electronic books with a source of the
electronic book;

providing via a user interface functioning via the processor the electronic books
for purchase by subscribers;

recording an indication of purchases of the electronic books in the repository; and

associating via the processor an amount of each purchase with the source for the
corresponding electronic book.

Claim 11. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein the associating step includes
associating the amount with a publisher for the corresponding electronic book.

Claim 12. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein the providing step includes electronically communicating with a viewer for use in receiving requests to purchase the electronic books.

Claim 13. (Original) The method of claim 10, further including charging a subscriber account for the purchases.

Claim 14. (Original) The method of claim 10, further including generating a bill to one of the subscribers for the purchases.

Claim 15. (Currently Amended) A method for providing on-line accounts for purchases of electronic books via a computer, comprising:

storing identifications of a plurality of electronic books on a viewer in a repository accessible by a processor at an operations center;

providing the electronic books for purchase by subscribers at a user interface functioning via the processor;

initializing a plurality of home subsystems to create on-line accounts for a plurality of subscribers, including transferring subscriber information and a billing account to a billing and collection system for each of the subscribers;

maintaining the on-line accounts for the subscribers in the repository;

recording via the processor an indication of purchases of the electronic books in the corresponding accounts;

associating via the processor an amount of each purchase with the source for the corresponding electronic book; and

permitting each of the subscribers to access a corresponding one of the on-line accounts for the subscriber at a user interface functioning via the processor.

Claim 16. (Original) The method of claim 15, further including providing on-line access to a customer service representative for the on-line accounts.

Claim 17. (Original) The method of claim 15 wherein the providing step includes electronically communicating with a viewer for use in receiving requests to purchase the electronic books.

Claim 18. (Original) The method of claim 15, further including charging one of the accounts for the purchases.

Claim 19. (Original) The method of claim 15, further including generating a bill to one of the subscribers for the purchases.

Claim 20. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for providing electronic books for purchase, comprising:

an operations center configured to:

receive a plurality of electronic books at an operations center from a plurality of sources;

format the plurality of electronic books into a standard format; and
store the formatted electronic books in a repository at the operations
center; and

a billing and collection system for electronically communicating with a viewer for providing electronic books for purchase, wherein the billing and collection system executes a method comprising:

storing identifications of a plurality of electronic books for display on the viewer;

associating each of the electronic books with a source of the electronic book;

providing the electronic books for purchase by subscribers;

recording an indication of purchases of the electronic books; and

associating an amount of each purchase with the source for the corresponding electronic book.

Claim 21. (Original) The apparatus of claim 20 wherein the associating step includes associating the amount with a publisher for the corresponding electronic book.

Claim 22. (Original) The apparatus of claim 20 wherein the providing step includes electronically communicating with a viewer for use in receiving requests to purchase the electronic books.

Claim 23. (Original) The apparatus of claim 20, further including charging a subscriber account for the purchases

Claim 24. (Original) The apparatus of claim 20, further including generating a bill to one of the subscribers for the purchases.

Claim 25. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for providing electronic books for purchase comprising:

a billing and collection system for electronically communicating with a viewer for providing electronic books for purchase, wherein the billing and collection system executes a method comprising:

initializing a plurality of home subsystems to create on-line accounts for a plurality of subscribers, including transferring subscriber information and a billing account to a billing and collection system for each of the subscribers;

storing identifications of a plurality of electronic books on a viewer;

providing the electronic books for purchase by subscribers;

maintaining on-line accounts for the subscribers;

recording an indication of purchases of the electronic books in the corresponding accounts;

associating an amount of each purchase with the source for the corresponding electronic book; and

permitting each of the subscribers to access a corresponding one of the on-line accounts for the subscriber.

Claim 26. (Original) The apparatus of claim 25, further including providing on-line access to a customer service representative for the on-line accounts.

Claim 27. (Original) The apparatus of claim 25 wherein the providing step includes electronically communicating with a viewer for use in receiving requests to purchase the electronic books.

Claim 28. (Original) The apparatus of claim 25, further including charging one of the accounts for the purchases.

Claim 29. (Original) The apparatus of claim 25, further including generating a bill to one of the subscribers for the purchases.

Claim 30. (New) The method of claim 10, further comprising security encoding plurality of formatted electronic books.

Claim 31. (New) The method of claim 10, wherein the plurality of electronic books are received from a plurality of sources having different formats of electronic books, and wherein formatting the electronic books includes converting the electronic books to a standard and compressed format.

Claim 32. (New) The method of claim 31, wherein the plurality of sources include at least one selected from a group consisting of a publisher, a newspaper, and an on-line service.

Claim 33. (New) The method of claim 10, further comprising receiving an indication of purchases of the electronic books via a telephone switching system.

Claim 34. (New) The method of claim 10, further comprising receiving an indication of purchases of the electronic books via a combined cable and telephone switching system.

Claim 35. (New) The method of claim 10, further comprising receiving an indication of purchases of the electronic books via a combined cellular and telephone switching system.